

# Department of Justice

United States Attorney James A. Lewis  
Central District of Illinois

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## **Former Charleston Man Charged with Embezzling from Not-for-Profit Business Organization**

Urbana, Ill. – A man who previously worked as a city planner for the city of Charleston, Ill., Jeffrey A. Finley, appeared in federal court this afternoon after a federal grand jury charged him with embezzling more than \$22,000 from a non-profit business organization when he served as the organization's treasurer, as announced by Jim Lewis, U.S. Attorney for the Central District of Illinois. Finley, 51, currently of Kerrville, Texas, entered a plea of not guilty to one count of wire fraud during his appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge David G. Bernthal. Trial has been scheduled for Sept. 17, 2012, before U.S. District Judge Michael P. McCuskey.

Last month, a federal grand jury returned the single-count indictment against Finley, and a summons was issued for Finley to appear for arraignment in federal court in Urbana, Ill. According to the indictment, Finley was a member of a professional non-profit organization known as Code Enforcement Officials of Southern Illinois, and served as the organization's treasurer from at least early 2003 to September 2007. In this capacity, Finley opened and maintained a checking account in the organization's name at a Charleston bank and was the account's authorized signatory.

The Code Enforcement Officials of Southern Illinois organization was formed by municipal employees in central and southern Illinois involved in the administration and enforcement of building and related codes. To fund its activities, members paid yearly dues and met approximately six times per year to provide training for its membership, usually in conjunction with a luncheon at a restaurant.

The indictment alleges that beginning as early as April 2004 and continuing through April 2008, Finley wrote more than 30 unauthorized checks on the organization's account which were payable to himself, in amounts ranging up to \$500. Finley then allegedly cashed the checks and used the money for his personal benefit. In addition, Finley allegedly made more than 25 unauthorized online electronic disbursements from the organization's checking account to make payments on his personal charge and credit accounts, including payments to MBNA Bank and Macy's. The indictment alleges that Finley abused his position as the organization's treasurer to embezzle more than \$22,000 from the organization.

The charges are the result of an investigation by the Illinois State Police. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard N. Cox.

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If convicted, the offense of mail fraud carries a maximum statutory penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. Final sentences are determined by the court. In imposing sentence, the court may consider federal sentencing guidelines, which include a defendant's criminal history, the amount of loss, and other applicable factors.

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment is merely an accusation; the defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

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